

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

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AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

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SUBJECT: SOVIET PRESS APPLAUDS CEMA APPROACH TO EC.

REF: MOSCOW 2245, MOSCOW 2611

1. SUMMARY - SOVIET PRESS HAS NOT ONLY REPORTED NEW CEMA PROPOSAL TO EC FOR UMBRELLA AGREEMENT BETWEEN TWO ECONOMIC ORGANIZATIONS, BUT HAS ALSO COME OUT STRONGLY IN FAVOR OF IT AS IMPORTANT AND LOGICAL DEVELOPMENT IN SPIRIT OF HELSINKI CSCE AGREEMENT, DETENTE AND NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN STATES HAVING DIFFERENT SOCIAL SYSTEMS. A TASS ARTICLE DATED LUXEMBOURG AND REPORTING TRANSMISSION OF DRAFT AGREEMENT TO LUXEMBOURG PRIME MINISTER THORN MENTIONS PROPOSALS FOR MFN, MUTUAL SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS CONTACTS, EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION, AND JOINT WORK ON PROBLEMS OF STANDARDIZATION, ENVIRONMENT AND STATISTICS. CEMA HAS ALSO PROPOSED EARLY NEGOTIATIONS IN MOSCOW OR BRUSSELS. THE SOVIET (AND CEMA) DECISION TO MOVE A CEMA-EC AGREEMENT INTO THE CONTEXT OF CSCE MAY BE PARTLY TO PROMOTE CEMA IMAGE AT SOVIET PARTY CONGRESS, BUT IT IS ALSO A DEFINITE SHIFT IN TACTICS ON THIS ISSUE. END SUMMARY.

2. IN STRIKING CONTRAST TO USUALLY SPARSE SOVIET PRESS COVERAGE OF CEMA-EC DIALOGUE, PRAVDA MORNING OF FEBRUARY 17 PUBLISHES FULL TEXT OF TASS ARTICLE FROM LUXEMBOURG REPORTING VISIT TO PRIME MINISTER THORN BY GDR DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER GERHARD WEISS FOR PRESENTATION OF NEW CEMA PROPOSAL ON COOPERATION WITH COMMON MARKET. MOVING AWAY FROM MERE FACTS OF WEISS-THORN MEETING, ARTICLE STRESSES THAT NEW "CEMA INITIATIVE" IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH MOTIVATION OF SOCIALIST COUNTRIES TO IMPLEMENT FINAL ACT OF CONFERENCE ON EUROPEAN SECURITY. THUS, IT SEEKS "EXPANSION AND ACTIVIZATION OF EQUITABLE ECONOMIC COOPERATION ON EUROPEAN CONTINENT, THE LIQUIDATION OF OBSTACLES IN TRADE BETWEEN SOCIALIST AND CAPITALIST COUNTRIES OF EUROPE, AND FULLY RESPONDS TO THE INTERESTS OF EUROPEAN PEOPLE."

3. ARTICLE GOES ON TO NOTE THAT ONE OF MOST IMPORTANT MEASURES OF AGREEMENT IS PROPOSAL FOR EXTENSION OF MFN BY BOTH SIDES ON "BASIS OF MUTUAL ACCOMMODATION." ALSO ENVISAGED, "IN SPIRIT OF FINAL ACT", ARE SUPPORT BY BOTH SIDES FOR BUSINESS CONTACTS, AND JOINT WORKING OUT OF PROBLEMS OF STANDARDIZATION, ENVIRONMENT AND STATISTICS. CEMA GROUP IS PREPARED FOR "JOINT STUDY OF ACTUAL PROBLEMS OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION, EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES OF RESPECTIVE ORGANIZATIONS, ETC. . ."

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4. THE OVERALL AGREEMENT, ACCORDING TO TASS, PROVIDES FOR POSSIBILITY OF SPECIAL BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL AGREEMENTS "BETWEEN CEMA COUNTRIES AND ORGANS OF THE EC, BETWEEN EC COUNTRIES AND ORGANS OF CEMA, AND ALSO BETWEEN THEIR COMPETENT ORGANIZATIONS." CEMA PROPOSES HOLDING OF MEETING IN THE NEAR FUTURE EITHER IN MOSCOW OR BRUSSELS FOR FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS.

5. IN CONCLUSION, ARTICLE COMMENTS THAT CEMA-EC AGREEMENT WOULD BE "A POSITIVE JOINT CONTRIBUTION OF TWO ORGANIZATIONS FOR EXPANSION AND STRENGTHENING OF EQUITABLE AND MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS RELATIONS" BETWEEN COUNTRIES OF BOTH ECONOMIC GROUPS. IT WOULD BE "A STEP FORWARD ON ROAD TO MATERIALIZATION OF DETENTE, STRENGTHENING OF PEACE IN EUROPE, IMPLEMENTATION OF IDEA OF ALL-EUROPEAN COOPERATION." THUS CEMA INITIATIVE IS NEW MOVE BY CEMA COUNTRIES FOR "FURTHER NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN EUROPEAN STATES WITH DIFFERENT SOCIAL SYSTEMS."

6. COMMENT - EMBASSY UNABLE TO JUDGE WHETHER IMMINENCE OF SOVIET TWENTY-FIFTH PARTY CONGRESS, NOW JUST ONE WEEK AWAY, HAS BEEN SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN SOVIET (AND CEMA) DECISION TO LINK SUDDENLY EC-CEMA AGREEMENT WITH CSCE FINAL ACT AND PRINCIPLE OF PAN-EUROPEAN COOPERATION. IN ANY EVENT, ALTHOUGH THESE IDEAS HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED IN PAPERS PUBLISHED BY MOSCOW ECONOMIC INSTITUTES, THEIR ACCEPTANCE AS OFFICIAL SOVIET AND CEMA POLICY IS A DEFINITE SHIFT IN TACTICS. THIS MOVE WILL ALSO, AT PARTY CONGRESS, FURTHER EMBELLISH CEMA AS SINCERE ADVOCATE OF HELSINKI PRINCIPLES NOW MAKING NEW OFFERS FOR PEACEFUL COOPERATION WITH MAJOR ECONOMIC BLOC IN WESTERN EUROPE. THE ONUS FOR "IMPLEMENTING HELSINKI" IS COMFORTABLY ON THE EC, AND THIS MAY BE POINTED OUT COMFORTABLY AT THE CONGRESS.

7. PROPOSALS AS OUTLINED IN TASS ARTICLE ARE VERY GENERAL IN TONE AND WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT DRAFT AGREEMENT IS ALSO VERY GENERAL. REFERENCE TO MFN REQUIRES CONSIDERABLE CLARIFICATION.

8. EMBASSY INFORMED THAT CEMA EXECUTIVE SECRETARY FADDEYEV HAS SCHEDULED PRESS CONFERENCE IN MOSCOW ON AFTERNOON OF FEBRUARY 18 AT WHICH TIME WE MAY POSSIBLY RECEIVE A FEW SPECIFIC DETAILS.
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